

## Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

### Listing of Claims:

1.-17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) A chemically synthesized double stranded ~~short interfering~~ nucleic acid (~~siNA~~) molecule, wherein:

- a. the ~~siNA~~ double stranded nucleic acid comprises a first strand and a second strand;
- b. the first strand comprises a sense region and the second strand comprises an antisense region;
- c. each strand is ~~49~~ about 18 to 29 ~~about 27~~ nucleotides in length, about 18 to about 23 nucleotides of each strand are complementary to each other, and at least 19 nucleotides of the second strand are complementary to a target RNA sequence; and
- d. the first strand includes a terminal cap moiety at the 5'-end, and the 3'-end, or both of the 5' and 3' ends of said first strand, and the second strand includes a terminal cap moiety at the 3'-end of said second strand, wherein said 3'-end terminal cap moiety is independently selected from the group consisting of 4',5'-methylene nucleotide; 1-(beta-D-erythrofuransyl) nucleotide, 4'-thio nucleotide; 1,5-anhydrohexitol nucleotide; L-nucleotides; *threo*-pentofuransyl nucleotide; acyclic 3',4'-seco nucleotide; acyclic 3,4-dihydroxybutyl nucleotide; acyclic 3,5-dihydroxypentyl nucleotide, 3'-3'-inverted nucleotide moiety; 3'-3'-inverted abasic moiety; 3'-2'-inverted nucleotide moiety; 3'-2'-inverted abasic moiety; and said 5'-end cap moiety is selected from the group consisting of 4',5'-methylene nucleotide; 1-(beta-D-erythrofuransyl) nucleotide; 4'-thio nucleotide, 1,5-anhydrohexitol nucleotide; L-nucleotide; LNA; *threo*-pentofuransyl nucleotide; acyclic 3',4'-seco nucleotide; 3,4-dihydroxybutyl nucleotide; 3,5-dihydroxypentyl nucleotide, 5'-5'-inverted nucleotide moiety; and 5'-5'-inverted abasic moiety.

19. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein said ~~siNA~~ molecule comprises no ribonucleotides.
20. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein said ~~siNA~~ molecule comprises one or more ribonucleotides.
21. (Canceled)
22. (Canceled)
23. (Canceled)
24. (Canceled)
25. (Canceled)
26. (Canceled)
27. (Canceled)
28. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein each strand comprises at least 19 nucleotides that are complementary to the nucleotides of the other strand.
29. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein said ~~siNA~~ double stranded nucleic acid molecule is assembled from two separate oligonucleotide fragments wherein one fragment comprises the sense region and a second fragment comprises the antisense region of said ~~siNA~~ double stranded nucleic acid molecule.
30. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein said sense region is connected to the antisense region via a linker molecule.
31. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 30, wherein said linker molecule is a polynucleotide linker.
32. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 30, wherein said linker molecule is a non-nucleotide linker.

33. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein pyrimidine nucleotides in the sense region are 2'-O-methyl pyrimidine nucleotides.
34. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein purine nucleotides in the sense region are 2'-deoxy purine nucleotides.
35. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein pyrimidine nucleotides present in the sense region are 2'-deoxy-2'-fluoro pyrimidine nucleotides.
36. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein pyrimidine nucleotides of said antisense region are 2'-deoxy-2'-fluoro pyrimidine nucleotides
37. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein purine nucleotides of said antisense region are 2'-O-methyl purine nucleotides.
38. (Currently Amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising the ~~siNA~~ double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18 in an acceptable carrier or diluent.